

REMARKS

Status of Claims

Claims 1-6 and 8-15 and 17 are pending in this application, of which claims 1, 12, 15 and 17 are independent.

Claims 1-6 and 8-14 have been allowed. Claims 16 and 18 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 15 and 17 have been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claims 16 and 18, respectively. Care has been taken to avoid the introduction of new matter. Favorable reconsideration of the application in light of the following comments is respectfully solicited.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 15 and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,001,609 (Gardner et al.).

Since claims 15 and 17 have been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claims 16 and 18, respectively, claims 15 and 17 are patentable over the cited reference. Thus, Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 15 and 17.

Conclusion

Having fully responded to all matters raised in the Office Action, Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance, an indication for which is respectfully solicited. If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

McDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP



Takashi Saito
Limited Recognition No. L0123

600 13th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005-3096
Phone: 202.756.8000 MEF:TS:llg
Facsimile: 202.756.8087
Date: May 7, 2010

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